

Historic Building Appraisal
Stanley Military Cemetery
Wong Ma Kok Road, Stanley, Hong Kong

The present cemetery dates back to 1933 when the Governor in Council authorized a place situated to the south of St. Stephen's College at Stanley to be used as a cemetery, then known as New Stanley Cemetery. The Cemetery contains graves dating back to Hong Kong's early colonial period. The earliest date of the gravestones is 1843 when the mortality of the garrison reached a high-point. The Cemetery also contains three graves from the First World War period, but most graves date from the Second World War.

***Historical
Interest***

The graves inside the present cemetery can be classified into three main types from two separate periods, namely the old garrison burials between 1841 and 1870 which came from the Stanley Cemetery, the internees' graves during the Japanese Occupation, and the Commonwealth war graves after World War II. Among the above three types of graves, the first type was most antique. There are a total of 89 old garrison graves in the Cemetery.

The Stanley Cemetery pre-dates even the Colonial Cemetery, having been opened on 21 July 1843. After 1870, the Stanley Cemetery seemed to have faded out and the use of it was discontinued. In 1933 the Government decided to erect a "New Stanley Cemetery" on the present site, at the same time removing all bodies and all remains of bodies from the Stanley Cemetery and from the Christian Chinese Cemetery, Stanley, being closed as from 15 July 1935.

The main architectural feature of the cemetery is the entrance staircase, which according to a record drawing held by the Architectural Services Department, was built for the **Imperial War Graves Commission**. The drawing is dated 1952 but it is not clear whether this was the actual year of construction. The style is **Modernist** featuring a symmetrical staircase enclosure with graceful curves and plain unadorned walls. The staircase ascends to the main feature of the cemetery which is the **Cross of Sacrifice**, a standard design for Commonwealth war cemeteries, designed by the Edwardian architect **Sir Reginald Blomfield**. The graves are marked with Portland stone and roughly hewn granite headstones and there are also interesting bodystones and chest-tombs from the old military cemetery. The National Societies' War Memorial built of squared rubble and designed and built in 1950 by the local architecture firm of Leigh and Orange is also a feature of the cemetery.

***Architectural
Merit***

***Built
Heritage
Value &
Historical
Significance***

The cemetery is of course an important part of Hong Kong's built heritage with important pieces of architecture and examples of rare old tombstones. It is of great interest both to local historians and to visitors from overseas. With its tranquil

***Social Value,
Rarity
& Local***

and serene atmosphere created by the landscaped and beautifully kept surroundings, the cemetery is naturally a popular place for weekend visitors. There are several more historical buildings and sites in the locality giving this part of Hong Kong much local interest. ***Interest***

Situated at the middle north of Stanley Peninsula, Stanley Military Cemetery enjoys a peaceful and quiet location. It is accompanied by Stanley Prison (赤柱監獄), where civilian buried at the Cemetery were interned, and St. Stephen's College (聖士提反書院), which is the original site of the garrison. St. Stephen's Beach, a favourite spot for locals is just behind St. Stephen's College Preparatory School (聖士提反書院附屬小學) on the opposite side of the road. Stanley Fort (赤柱砲台) is at the southern tip of the Stanley Peninsula. The soldiers stationed there became the first group of people buried in the Cemetery. ***Group Value***

The question of adaptive re-use does not arise.

***Adaptive
re-use***